

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for use in a processor, the method comprising:
if a dependency exists between a greater width producer instruction and a lesser width consumer instruction, substituting for execution a greater width source register specifier for a lesser width source register specified by the lesser width consumer instruction.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the greater width source register substituted for the lesser width source register is the greater width register onto which the lesser width source register is aliased.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein substituting the greater width register includes setting an indication that the lesser width source register is to be replaced by the greater width register.
4. A method for use in a processor, the method comprising:
if a dependency exists between a lesser width producer instruction and a greater width consumer instruction, substituting plural instructions for the greater width consumer instruction.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the plural instructions substituted for the greater width consumer instruction include:
a first instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a first greater width source register of the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers to be merged into a first temporary register;
a second instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a second greater width source register of the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers to be merged into a second temporary register; and

a third instruction to execute the greater width consumer instruction using the first temporary register and the second temporary register as source registers.

6. A method for use in a processor, the method comprising:
determining, if a dependency exists between a greater width instruction and a lesser width instruction;

if a dependency exists between a greater width producer instruction and a lesser width consumer instruction, substituting for execution a greater width source register specifier for a lesser width source register specified by the lesser width consumer instruction; and

if a dependency exists between a lesser width producer instruction and a greater width consumer instruction, substituting plural instructions for the greater width consumer instruction.

7. The method of claim 6 further including stalling at least one instruction of a fetch group if a dependency exists between an instruction in the fetch group and both an active lesser width producer instruction and an active greater width producer instruction.

8. The method of claim 6 wherein the greater width source register substituted for the lesser width source register is the greater width register onto which the lesser width source register is aliased.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein substituting the greater width register includes setting an indication that the lesser width source register is to be replaced by the greater width register.

10. The method of claim 6, wherein the plural instructions substituted for the greater width consumer instruction include:

a first instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a first greater width source register of the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers to be merged into a first temporary register;

a second instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a second greater width source register of the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers to be merged into a second temporary register; and

a third instruction to execute the greater width consumer instruction using the first temporary register and the second temporary register as source registers.

11. The method of claim 6, wherein determining if a dependency exists includes:

generating a first register mask identifying registers to be modified by lesser width instructions active in a pipeline; and

generating a second register mask identifying registers to be modified by greater width instructions active in the pipeline.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein determining if a dependency exists includes:

comparing a lesser width register specifier of an instruction against the second register mask; and

comparing a greater width register specifier of an instruction against the first register mask.

13. The method of claim 6, wherein determining if a dependency exists includes determining if a greater width instruction in a fetch group modifies a lesser width source register specified by a younger instruction in the same fetch group.

14. The method of claim 6, wherein determining if a dependency exists includes determining if a lesser width instruction in a fetch group modifies a greater width source register specified by a younger instruction in the same fetch group.

15. A method of handling a register conflict between a first instruction specifying a greater width destination register and a second instruction specifying a lesser width source register, the method comprising substituting for execution the

lesser width source register specifier of the second instruction with a greater width source register specifier.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the register specified by the greater width source specifier is a greater width register onto which the register specified by the lesser width source register specifier is aliased.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein substituting the greater width register specifier includes setting an indication that the register specified by the lesser width source register specifier is to be replaced by the greater width register.

18. A method of handling a register conflict between a first instruction specifying a lesser width destination register and a second instruction specifying a greater width source register, the method comprising substituting plural instructions for the second instruction, wherein the plural instructions include:

at least a first substitute instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto the source register specified by the second instruction into a temporary register; and

a second substitute instruction to perform the operation specified by the second instruction using the temporary register as a source register.

19. The method of claim 18 further including a third substitute instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a second greater width source register specified by the second instruction into a second temporary register, and wherein the second substitute instruction performs the operation using the first temporary register and the second temporary register.

20. An instruction decode unit including:

logic to substitute a greater width source register specifier for a lesser width source register specifier if a dependency exists between a greater width producer instruction and a lesser width consumer instruction.

21. The instruction decode unit of claim 20 further including logic to prevent at least one instruction from being delivered for execution if a dependency exists

between an instruction in the fetch group and both an active lesser width producer instruction and an active greater width producer instruction.

22. The instruction decode unit of claim 20, wherein the logic to substitute the greater width register specifier includes logic to set an indicator in the lesser width source register specifier indicating to that the lesser width source register is to be replaced by the greater width register.

23. An instruction decode unit including:

logic to substitute plural instructions for a greater width consumer instruction if a dependency exists between a lesser width producer instruction and a greater width consumer instruction.

24. The instruction decode unit of claim 23 wherein the logic to substitute plural instructions for the greater width consumer instruction includes:

logic to generate a first instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a first greater width source register specified by the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers being merged into a first temporary register;

logic to generate a second instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a second greater width source register specified by the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers being merged into a second temporary register; and

logic to designate the first temporary register and the second temporary register as source registers of the greater width consumer instruction.

25. A processor comprising:

an instruction decode unit including:

plural counters to track a number of instructions active in a pipeline; plural mask registers to hold vectors indicating particular registers to be modified by active instructions;

logic to compare destination and source registers specified by the instructions against at least one of the plural mask registers to

determine if a dependency exists between an instruction being decoded and an active instruction;

logic to substitute a greater width source register specifier for a lesser width source register specifier if a dependency exists between a greater width producer instruction and a lesser width consumer instruction, and

logic to substitute plural instructions for a greater width consumer instruction if a dependency exists between a lesser width producer instruction and a greater width consumer instruction.

26. The processor of claim 25 further including logic to prevent at least one instruction from being delivered for execution if a dependency exists between an instruction in the fetch group and both an active lesser width producer instruction and an active greater width producer instruction.

27. The processor of claim 25, wherein the logic to substitute the greater width register specifier includes logic to set a bit in the lesser width source register specifier indicating to that the lesser width source register is to be replaced by the greater width register.

28. The processor of claim 25, wherein the logic to substitute plural instructions for the greater width consumer instruction includes:

logic to generate a first instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a first greater width source register specified by the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers being merged into a first temporary register;

logic to generate a second instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a second greater width source register specified by the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers being merged into a second temporary register; and

logic to designate the first temporary register and the second temporary register as source registers of the greater width consumer instruction.

29. The processor of claim 25, further including logic to determine if a greater width producer instruction that is part of a fetch group modifies a lesser width source register specified by a younger instruction in the same fetch group.

30. The processor of claim 25, further including logic to determine if a lesser width producer instruction that is part of a fetch group modifies a greater width source register specified by a younger instruction in the same fetch group.

31. A processor comprising

means for determining if a dependency exists between a greater width instruction and a lesser width instruction;

means for substituting a greater width source register specifier for a lesser width source register specifier if a dependency exists between a greater width producer instruction and a lesser width consumer instruction,;

and

means for substituting plural instructions for the greater width consumer instruction if a dependency exists between a lesser width producer instruction and a greater width consumer instruction.

32. The processor of claim 31, further including means for stalling at least one instruction in a fetch group if a dependency exists between an instruction in the fetch group and both an active lesser width producer instruction and an active greater width producer instruction..

33. The processor of claim 31, wherein the means for substituting plural instructions for the greater width consumer instruction include:

means for generating a first instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a first greater width source register of the greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers being merged into a first temporary register;

means for generating a second instruction to merge plural lesser width registers aliased onto a second greater width source register of the

greater width consumer instruction, the plural lesser width registers being merged into a second temporary register; and means for generating a third instruction to execute the greater width consumer instruction using the first temporary register and the second temporary register as source registers.

34. The processor of claim 31, wherein the means for determining if a dependency exists includes means for determining if a greater width destination instruction in a fetch group modifies a lesser width source register specified by a younger instruction in the same fetch group.

35. The processor of claim 31, wherein the means for determining if a dependency exists includes means for determining if a lesser width instruction in a fetch group modifies a greater width source register specified by a younger instruction in the same fetch group.